

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY


(Chapter II of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

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| Applicant's or agent's file reference P0888 | | FOR FURTHER ACTION | | See Form PCT/PEA/416 |
| International application No. PCT/GB2004/004294 | | International filing date (day/month/year) 11.10.2004 | Priority date (day/month/year) 21.10.2003 | |
| International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC A62B35/04 | | | | |
| Applicant UNILINE SAFETY SYSTEMS LIMITED et Al. | | | | |
| <p>1. This report is the international preliminary examination report, established by this International Preliminary Examining Authority under Article 35 and transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.</p> <p>2. This REPORT consists of a total of 5 sheets, including this cover sheet.</p> <p>3. This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, comprising:</p> <p>a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sent to the applicant and to the International Bureau a total of 11 sheets, as follows:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis of this report and/or sheets containing rectifications authorized by this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> sheets which supersede earlier sheets, but which this Authority considers contain an amendment that goes beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed, as indicated in item 4 of Box No. I and the Supplemental Box.</p> <p>b. <input type="checkbox"/> (sent to the International Bureau only) a total of (indicate type and number of electronic carrier(s)) , containing a sequence listing and/or tables related thereto, in computer readable form only, as indicated in the Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing (see Section 802 of the Administrative Instructions).</p> | | | | |
| <p>4. This report contains indications relating to the following items:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. I Basis of the opinion</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. II Priority</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VI Certain documents cited</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application</p> | | | | |
| Date of submission of the demand 23.05.2005 | | Date of completion of this report 09.02.2006 | | |
| Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office D-80298 Munich Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 epmu d Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465 | | Authorized Officer Neiller, F Telephone No. +49 89 2399-2685 | | |



**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT
ON PATENTABILITY**

International application No.
PCT/GB2004/004294

Box No. I Basis of the report

1. With regard to the **language**, this report is based on the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
- ☐ This report is based on translations from the original language into the following language , which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of:
- ☐ international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b))
 - ☐ publication of the international application (under Rule 12.4)
 - ☐ international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3)
2. With regard to the **elements*** of the international application, this report is based on *(replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report):*

Description, Pages

| | |
|-----------|----------------------------------|
| 1-3, 8-33 | as originally filed |
| 4-7 | filed with telefax on 23.05.2005 |

Claims, Numbers

| | |
|------|----------------------------------|
| 1-37 | filed with telefax on 23.05.2005 |
|------|----------------------------------|

Drawings, Sheets

| | |
|------------|---------------------|
| 1/15-15/15 | as originally filed |
|------------|---------------------|

- ☐ a sequence listing and/or any related table(s) - see Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing

3. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages
- ☐ the claims, Nos.
- ☐ the drawings, sheets/figs
- ☐ the sequence listing (*specify*):
- ☐ any table(s) related to sequence listing (*specify*):

4. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments annexed to this report and listed below had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).

- ☐ the description, pages
- ☐ the claims, Nos.
- ☐ the drawings, sheets/figs
- ☐ the sequence listing (*specify*):
- ☐ any table(s) related to sequence listing (*specify*):

* If item 4 applies, some or all of these sheets may be marked "superseded."

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Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------|------|
| Novelty (N) | Yes: Claims | 1-37 |
| | No: Claims | |
| Inventive step (IS) | Yes: Claims | 1-37 |
| | No: Claims | |
| Industrial applicability (IA) | Yes: Claims | 1-37 |
| | No: Claims | |

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7):

see separate sheet

Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

The following observations on the clarity of the claims, description, and drawings or on the question whether the claims are fully supported by the description, are made:

see separate sheet

Re Item V.

1 INDEPENDENT CLAIM 1

- 1.1 FR-A1-2 638 094, being considered as the closest prior art, discloses a fall arrest device according to the preamble of claim 1.

The problem to be solved by the invention was to have a fall arrest device which is able to move consistently with the user irrespective of whether he is ascending or descending, while avoiding that the device gets accidentally disconnected from the track.

In order to solve this problem, the fall arrest device of the present invention comprises a lock plate which is movable towards and away from the path of the track through the device, the lock plate including biasing means adapted to bias the plate to a position in which it co-operates with the U-shaped member to prevent the device being removed from the track.

These features are novel and the skilled person cannot derive them in an obvious manner from the cited A-documents in order to solve the problem posed.

- 1.2 In the light of the above, the subject-matter of claim 1 and its dependent claims is considered to meet the requirements of Article 33(2) and (3) PCT.
- 1.3 The industrial applicability of the device is self-evident (Article 33(4) PCT).

Re Item VIII.

- 1 The relevant background art disclosed in the document FR-A-2 638 094 should have been mentioned in the description.

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(SEPARATE SHEET)**

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It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a fall arrest device which overcomes, or at least ameliorates, one or more of the above disadvantages.

5 According to one aspect of the present invention there is provided a fall arrest device comprising:

a U-shaped member adapted to accommodate a track of a fall arrest system;

10

a cam member including an actuating arm and a cam portion, the cam member being pivotably mounted on the device such that the cam portion is movable towards the U-shaped member so as to lock the track between the cam portion and an
15 internal surface of the U-shaped member in the event of a fall;

20

biasing means urging the cam member in a direction away from the internal surface of the U-shaped member to a position in which the cam portion is adapted to allow the track to pass between the cam portion and the internal surface of the U-shaped member;

25

actuating means adapted in the event of a fall to engage with the actuating arm or the cam member and to cause the cam member to pivot against the biasing force of the biasing means such that the cam portion locks the track;

30

friction means adapted in use to engage with the track such that at least a predetermined minimum load is required to cause the device to move relative to the track; and

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The actuating means may include a lever adapted to engage the cam member. The lever may be slidably engaged with an arcuate slot provided in the cam member.

- 5 Alternatively or additionally, the actuating means may engage directly with the cam member.

10 The actuating means may be provided with an aperture for receiving fastening means for securing a user to the device. The device may include a plate extending in a plane substantially parallel to the actuating means and provided with an aperture for receiving the fastening means. Two spaced plates may be provided, one plate being positioned on either side of the actuating means.

15 The aperture in the plate may be curved. Moreover, the aperture may include a portion at least at one end thereof extending in a direction substantially parallel to the axial direction of the path of the track through the device.

20

An intermediate member may be provided, the intermediate member extending through the aperture in the actuating means and through the aperture in the or each plate, for connecting to a fastening means.

25

30 The friction means may comprise a cylindrical post, the axially extending surface of the post being adapted to engage the track. Two cylindrical posts may be provided, the posts being spaced in the axial direction of the path of the track through the device. The cylindrical posts may be in the region of opposite ends of the device.

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CLAIMS

1. A fall arrest device comprising:

5 a U-shaped member (3, 5) adapted to accommodate a track (7) of a fall arrest system;

10 a cam member (15, 17; 81, 83; 87, 89) including an actuating arm (21; 85) and a cam portion (19), the cam member being pivotably mounted on the device such that the cam portion is movable towards the U-shaped member so as to lock the track between the cam portion and an internal surface of the U-shaped member in the event of a fall;

15 biasing means (22) urging the cam member in a direction away from the internal surface of the U-shaped member to a position in which the cam portion is adapted to allow the track to pass between the cam portion and the internal surface of the U-shaped member;

20 actuating means (27; 93) adapted in the event of a fall to engage with the actuating arm or the cam member and to cause the cam member to pivot against the biasing force of the biasing means such that the cam portion locks the track; and

25

friction means (55) adapted in use to engage with the track such that at least a predetermined minimum load is required to cause the device to move relative to the track,

30 characterised by

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7. A device as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the actuating means (27; 93) is pivotably mounted on the device.

5 8. A device as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the actuating means (27; 93) is movable in a direction towards and away from the path of the track (7) through the device.

10 9. A device as claimed in claim 8, characterised in that the actuating means (27; 93) is movable in a direction substantially perpendicular to the path of the track (7).

15 10. A device as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the actuating means (27; 93) includes a lever (31; 95) adapted to engage the cam member (15, 17; 87, 89).

20 11. A device as claimed in claim 10, characterised in that the lever (31) is slidably engaged with an arcuate slot (35) provided in the cam member (15, 17).

25 12. A device as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the actuating means (27) engages directly with the cam member (15, 17).

30 13. A device as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the actuating means (27; 93) is provided with an aperture (29) for receiving fastening means (63; 71) for securing a user to the device.

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20. A device as claimed in claim 19, characterised in that two cylindrical posts (55) are provided, the posts being spaced in the axial direction of the path of the track (7) through the device.

5

21. A device as claimed in claim 20, characterised in that the cylindrical posts (55) are in the region of opposite ends of the device.

10

22. A device as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the friction means (55) is movable towards and away from the path of the track (7).

15

23. A device as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the friction means (55) is adapted to exert a force on the track (7) such that a predetermined minimum load is required to move the device relative to the track.

20

24. A device as claimed in claim 23, characterised in that the predetermined load corresponds to a load less than 5 kg.

25

25. A device as claimed in claim 23 or 24, characterised in that the predetermined load corresponds to a load greater than the weight of the device.

30

26. A device as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the friction means (55) includes means (59) biasing the friction means towards the path of the track (7).

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5 bracket (65, 101) is formed intermediate end portions thereof with inclined faces whereby a portion of the track is exposed intermediate the end portions for engagement with the friction means (55) and with the cam portion (19) of the fall arrest device.

34. A system as claimed in claim 33, characterised in that the track (7) is in the form of a cable.

10 35. A system as claimed in claim 33 or 34, characterised in that the intermediate bracket (101) is formed intermediate end portions thereof with inclined faces whereby a portion of the track (7) intermediate the end portions is exposed for engagement with the internal surface of the U-shaped member (3, 5) of the fall arrest device.

20 36. A system as claimed in claim 35, characterised in that the end portions of the intermediate bracket (101) are interconnected by means lateral connecting portions provided at each side of the track.

25 37. A system as claimed in claim 35 or 36, characterised in that the end portions of the intermediate bracket (101) are formed with divergent faces, one of which faces is adapted to engage the friction means (55) and the other of which faces is adapted to engage the internal surface of the U-shaped member (3, 5).